

State of Vermont Special Investigation Unit Grants Handbook

Program Support Guidance



July 1st, 2013 – June 30th, 2014

**Grants for the Establishment
and Sustainability of
Vermont Special Investigation Units**

State of Vermont
Special Investigation Units (SIU)
Grant Handbook/Guidelines

Background Information

The 2005-2006 Vermont General Assembly passed S.15 which was subsequently signed into Law by Governor James Douglas on May 26th, 2006. The overall intent of this legislation is to provide all citizens of the state of Vermont with access to special investigation units by the year 2009.

Sec.12. 24 V.S.A. § 1940 is added to read:

1940. Task Forces: Special Investigation Units;

Board; Grants

(a) Pursuant to the authority established under section 1938 of this title, and in collaboration with law enforcement agencies, investigative agencies, victims' advocates and social service providers, the department of state's attorneys and sheriffs shall coordinate efforts to provide access in each region of the state to special investigative units to investigate sex crimes, child abuse, domestic violence, or crimes against those with physical or developmental disabilities. The general assembly intends that access to special investigative units be available to all Vermonters as soon as reasonably possible, but not later than July 1, 2009.

(b) A task force or specialized investigative unit organized and operating under this section may accept, receive, and disburse in furtherance of its duties and functions any funds, grants, and services made available by the state of Vermont and its agencies, the federal government and its agencies, any municipality or other unit of local government, or private or civic sources. Any employee covered by an agreement establishing a special investigative unit shall remain an employee of the donor agency.

(c) A specialized investigative unit grants board is created which shall be comprised of the attorney general, the secretary of administration, the executive director of the department of state's attorneys, the commissioner of the department of public safety, the commissioner of the department for children and families, a representative of the Vermont sheriffs' association, a representative of the Vermont association of chiefs of police, the executive director of the center for crime victim services, and the executive director of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Inc. Specialized investigative units organized and operating under this section for the investigation of sex crimes, child abuse, elder abuse, domestic violence, or crimes against those with physical or developmental disabilities may apply to the board for a grant or grants covering the costs of salaries and employee benefits to be expended during a given year for the performance of unit duties as well as unit operating costs for rent, utilities, equipment, training, and supplies. Grants under this section shall be approved by a majority of the entire board and shall not exceed 50 percent of the yearly salary and employee benefit costs of the unit. Preference shall be given to grant applications which include the participation of the department of public

safety, the department for children and families, sheriffs' departments, community victims' advocacy organizations, and municipalities within the region.

However, a sheriff's department in a county with a population of less than 8,000 residents shall upon application receive a grant of up to \$20,000.00 for 50 percent of the yearly salary and employee benefits costs of a part-time specialized investigative unit investigator which shall be paid to the department as time is billed on a per hour rate as agreed by contract up to the maximum amount of the grant.

(d) The board may adopt rules relating to grant eligibility criteria, processes for applications, awards, and reports related to grants authorized pursuant to this section. The attorney general shall be the adopting authority. (Added 2005, No. 83, § 12; amended 2005, No. 192 (Adj. Sess.), § 5, eff. May 26, 2006; 2009, No. 1, § 52a, eff. March 4, 2009; 2009, No. 156 (Adj. Sess.), § E.206; No. 157 (Adj. Sess.), § 15.)

Section I: Overview of Available Grants and General Guidelines

Three Forms of SIU Grants May be Applied For:

- **Program Support Grants (One per SIU) – These grants provide the SIU with funding to support the core operational needs of the unit with specific focus on administrative and facility expenses. Local or county law enforcement expenses may be considered part of a Program Support Grant application if supported by vote of the local SIU board. Requests submitted under this option must identify the funding offset used to allow for funding a law enforcement position and the request must be in compliance with the limitations noted in statute. The VT SIU Grants Board continues to support local decision making on distribution of the limited funding available for the Program Support Grants and recognizes the need for flexibility in program implementation.**
- **Law Enforcement Grants – awarded to SIU for pass-through to law enforcement department(s)**
 - ❖ **\$60,000.00 grant, to partially fund a fulltime law enforcement position that has been dedicated to an SIU; the providing law enforcement agency agrees to have their officer investigate SIU specific crimes throughout the designated SIU region. NOTE - SIUs using Program Support Grant funding for law enforcement expenses are not eligible for Law Enforcement Grants under this section.**
 - ❖ **\$20,000.00 grant, hourly reimbursement to County Sheriffs with County population under 8,000 residents (Essex and Grand Isle Counties only).**
- **Training Grants – To support SIU Statewide Training Programs (Contingent on Available Funding)**

Grantee Information and Agreement Form

The Grantee Information and Agreement Form (GIAF) is the official agreement between the awarded Special Investigative Unit (SIU) and the Vermont Special Investigative Unit Grants Board (VSIUGB). It acknowledges that the awarded SIU accepts the funding awarded by VSIUGB and will follow all requirements (i.e. procedures, state per diem rates and general guidelines outlined in the award letter and this VSIUGB “Grant Handbook”).

Carefully select the appropriate designee at your SIU; this person will receive all reporting materials, inquiries, and updates. All funding checks will be written to the SIU name only. Checks will not be written to those affiliated with the SIU including the contact person listed on the agreement, consultants or multidisciplinary team members.

The GIAF should be filled out immediately. **An electronic copy of your signed GIAF, in .pdf format, is the preferred method of return to the Grants Program Manager. You are responsible for providing the signed GIAF in electronic form and maintaining the originally signed GIAF in your SIU grant file for each grant awarded. Alternatively, you may mail the original signed copy of the GIAF to the SIU Grants Program Manager and make a copy for your program files.**

The signed GIAF must be received by the SIU Grants Program Manager within 15 days of the award to ensure timely receipt of the awarded funds. If, after submitting the GIAF, any information changes, promptly notify the Vermont Special Investigative Grants Board in writing through the SIU Grants Program Manager.

Award Identification Number

Example – **2014-VTSIU-PS-xx.** (Name of SIU)

The Award Identification Number (AIN) was developed to assist program managers with tracking grant awards. Grant awardees can find this number on the GIAF. This number should be filed in your records and be used with all correspondence in regards to your grant. **If you have more than one grant with VSIUGB, each grant will have a different AIN that should be used with all correspondence related to that specific grant award.**

Things to Remember

- VSIUGB anticipates that all grantees will expend and satisfactorily document their *full* grant award. All original invoices, receipts, bank account records and any other documents pertaining to the expenditure of Grant funds must be kept on file by the grantee for a minimum of four (4) years.
- The following SIU staff should have access to VSIUGB grant procedures:
 1. Staff members who hold positions funded by a SIU grant.
 2. Individuals that will use SIU grant funding for travel and/or other expenditures.
 3. Staff members that have administrative duties associated with SIU grants.
- Special Investigative Units are required to submit itemized account records of all expenditures of SIU grant funds. Expenditures that are not properly documented will not be allowed to be charged to the grant.
- SIU grant awardees will maintain on file, all original documents related grant expenditures for a minimum of four (4) years. These files will be made available for audit upon the request of the VSIUGB or Grants Program Manager.

Section II: Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Why are there restrictions on SIU funding?

The Vermont Special Investigative Unit Grants Board strongly believes that State funding for Special Investigative Units be first used as the “glue that holds an SIU together” i.e. salary and benefits for essential personnel and specific operating costs as outlined in the Act passed by the 2005-2006 General Assembly.

Allowable Costs

Use the following list of allowable costs as a guideline. It does not mention every item that could be allowed for purchase with SIU grant funds. Please use the following list in conjunction with the list of unallowable costs. Direct all questions about specific items to the SIU Grants Program Manager.

Please remember, by Statute, SIU Grant Funding “shall not exceed 50 percent of the yearly salary and employee benefit costs of the unit”.

Personnel-Administrative (Executive Directors and Administrative Assistants)

- Salaries
- Fringe benefits
- Law Enforcement investigators’ salary (excluding overtime) & benefits, ***under specific request of a local SIU board***, within the statutory limitations of Title 24 VSA §1940 (c).

Rent/Utilities

- Rent/Mortgage
- Heat
- Electric
- Telephone
- Internet Service
- Insurance, Building
- Maintenance

Supplies/Equipment

- General Office Supplies
- Office Equipment (purchase or lease)
- Computer Equipment
- Interviewing/Recording Equipment
- Photography Equipment
- Storage Equipment
- Furniture (i.e. desks, chairs, tables, cabinets)

Other

- Postage
- Printing
- Dues/Subscriptions
- Publications/Periodicals
- Membership Fees
- Publicity (i.e. brochures, ads, signs)
- Recording and Transcription Services
- Insurance, Liability

Training – *when authorized* (The VSIUGB will give preference to funding requests to host instate training conferences over requests for individual out of state training.)

- Registration Fees
- Travel (as listed below)
- Meals (as listed below)
- Rental of Conference Rooms and Meeting Spaces
- Equipment Rental

Travel (Instate)

- Airfare, Railway, Bus Fare (most economical coach class)
- Shuttle Service and Taxicab Fares (to/from/between airports, hotels and conference centers only)
- Tolls
- Parking Fees

Meals (Instate)

- Up to the Maximum of the Current Vt. State Per Diem Rates, for Each Meal (as established through collective bargaining agreements).

Mileage (Instate)

- Auto Travel to Meetings, Trainings and Work Related Events/Activities
- Up to Maximum Federal/State Mileage Rate. (Visit the IRS web page for current rate which are normally update every six months for, Jan. – June and July – Dec.)

Consultants (Defined as anyone not on SIU's payroll and receiving compensation for work)

- Trainers
- Speakers
- Professional Services

Unallowable Costs

Any expenditure that is not directly related to the Special Investigative Unit and its mission is unallowable.

Personnel-Criminal Justice System Positions

- Law Enforcement (*unless specifically requested and approved by local SIU board*)
- Prosecutors
- Victim Advocates
- DCF Case Workers

Travel

- **Out of State, unless authorized by the SIU Grants Program Manager or VSIUGB**
- Recreational Trips During Conferences (from training center to restaurant, mall etc)
- Cancellation Fees or Ticket Change Fees

Lodging

- **Out of State, unless authorized by the SIU Grants Program Manager or VSIUGB**
- Telephone Calls
- Laundry
- Movie Rental Fees
- Bar Charges

Training

- **Out of State, unless authorized by the SIU Grants Program Manager or VSIUGB**
- Entertainment
- Sporting Events
- Passport Charges or Visa Fees
- Bar Charges/Alcoholic Beverages
- Laundry Charges
- Cancellation Fees

Meals & Incidentals

- **Out of State, unless authorized by the SIU Grants Program Manager or VSIUGB**
- Tips or Gratuity Charges
- Compensation when Conference Includes Meals in the Registration Costs
- Working Receptions
- Working Breakfasts, Lunches, or Dinners
- Snack Foods for the SIU
- Alcoholic Beverages

Mileage

- Gas Reimbursements (only prevailing federal/state mileage per diem allowed)

Personnel

- Dual Compensation for Salaried Employees
- Stipends for Attending Training
- Bonuses
- **Overtime**
- Salary for Employees or Consultants, for Time Spent Lobbying or Fundraising

Rent/Utilities

- Late Fees

Other

- Land Acquisitions
- Corporation Formation Fees
- Non-Profit Incorporation Fees
- New Construction
- Renovation/Remodeling
- Capital Campaigns
- Vehicle Purchases, Insurances, Registrations
- Basic Law Enforcement Equipment, to include:
 - Firearms & ammunition
 - Uniforms
 - Radio communications equipment
 - Dry cleaning/laundry services
- Alcohol Purchases
- Artwork (paintings, murals, frames, sketches, sculptures)
- Web Design and/or Support
- Giveaways – not limited to the following:
 - Teddy bears
 - Toys
 - Clothing
 - Food and Beverages
 - Flowers, Awards, Plaques, etc.
 - Gift Cards, Receipts, or Gifts of Any Kind

Section III: Grant Monitoring Procedures

Grantee Programmatic and Fiscal Responsibilities

Quarterly Reports for [Program Support Grants](#):

All program support grant awardees are required to submit quarterly reports. These reports consist of a ***Narrative Reporting Form***, a ***Statistical Data Form (including NCATrak documentation)***, and a ***Fiscal Documentation Form*** with the **appropriate fiscal documents** illustrating how grant dollars were spent.

Quarterly Reports for [Law Enforcement Grants](#):

All law enforcement grant awardees are required to submit quarterly reports. These reports consist of a ***Narrative Reporting Form*** and a ***Fiscal Documentation Form*** with the **appropriate fiscal documents** illustrating how grant dollars were spent.

Quarterly Reports for [Training Grants](#):

All training grant awardees are required to submit quarterly reports unless specified otherwise in the award letter. These reports consist of a ***Narrative Reporting Form*** and a ***Fiscal Documentation Form*** with the **appropriate fiscal documents** illustrating how grant dollars were spent.

These reports are due on or before the following dates:

- 1st Quarter: October 15th (documenting July 1st, – September 30th, activities and expenditures)**
- 2nd Quarter: January 15th (documenting October 1st, – December 31st, activities and expenditures)**
- 3rd Quarter: April 15th (documenting January 1st, – March 31st, activities and expenditures)**
- 4th Quarter: July 15th (documenting April 1st, - June 30th, activities and expenditures)**

Appropriate Fiscal Documentation

Appropriate documentation is defined as documentation that will provide a clear accounting and accurately portray your grant expenditures. For the quarterly reports VSIUGB will accept general ledger logs from your SIU's accounting system (i.e. QuickBooks, Quicken, Peachtree, etc.) that clearly document the: check number, date of expenditure, amount expended and a detailed explanation of the expenditure. **If** the SIU's accounting system is not capable of generating a general ledger log, copies of cancelled checks and/or copies of credit card statements for all

purchases/expenditures must be submitted with an explanation of what the expenditure was for. The original documents must be kept on file, at the SIU, for a minimum of four (4) years. The following are some examples of appropriate receipts/invoices:

Travel: airline/train tickets (no boarding passes), printed internet receipts, cab/shuttle receipts, credit card statements.

Training: registration forms with the registration cost clearly outlined.

Meals and incidental expenses: per-diem reimbursement or *itemized* receipt with diner's initials.

Mileage: travel logs – documenting the person who made the trip, purpose of the trip, points of travel and mileage.

Personnel: itemized account ledger, copies of pay checks, invoices.

Rent/Mortgage/Utilities: bill/invoice from vender/utility companies.

Equipment: invoices from vender.

Lodging, consultant fees, printing, supplies/equipment, or “other” receipts or invoices

Deliverables:

All Program Support Grant Awardees are required to submit on an annual basis, two deliverable reports in narrative format.

1 - Titled “**Law Enforcement/Municipal Collaborations**” This deliverable report should document efforts made by the SIU in seeking financial and/or in-kind support from their region's Law Enforcement Agencies and Municipalities. To include but not limited to, documentation of all support being received, any agreed upon future support, as well as the issues discussed preventing and/or limiting local support.

2 - Titled “**Multidisciplinary Team Collaborations**” This deliverable report should document efforts made by the SIU in seeking support from their region's State's Attorney's Office, Victim Advocates, DCF District Offices, Domestic/Sexual Violence Network Organizations, and Child Advocacy Centers if separate from SIU. To include but not limited to, documentation of all support being received, any agreed upon future support, as well as the issues discussed preventing and/or limiting local support.

Deliverable reports are due on or before April 15th of each year.

If an SIU has questions regarding appropriate documentation, please contact the Grants Program Manager listed on the SIU's award letter.

Grant Close-Out

The end date for VSIUGB Grants, unless otherwise specified, will be June 30th of each year (the end of the State's Fiscal Year). Please ensure that all expenses are incurred prior to the end of the grant award expiration date and liquidated (paid) no more than 10 days after the grant expiration date.

Audits

The VSIUGB requires an annual onsite audit to be conducted by the Grants Program Manager of each Special Investigation Unit receiving SIU grant funds. Audits of the previous year grant award will be conducted between September and February of the current grant year. By September 1st of each calendar year, SIUs will receive written notice requiring them to schedule said Audit with the Grants Program Manager.

Use of VSIUGB Award Funds for Travel

The Vermont Special Investigative Unit Grants Board recognizes that members of Special Investigation Units will need to travel both instate and out of state to conduct investigations, attend meetings and training seminars, as well as other SIU related business. It is VSIUGB's desire to support those who have a legitimate need to travel and to fairly reimburse them for out-of-pocket expenses incurred during travel. It is also VSIUGB's policy that such travel will be done in the most economical manner and reimbursement for travel will be performed within the guidelines established through the State of Vermont's collective bargaining process.

Persons traveling utilizing VSIUGB funds will limit their expense claims to the period of the meeting or training. If a participant finds it necessary to arrive the evening before an event, VSIUGB will provide reimbursement for the expenses related to the evenings accommodations. Similarly, if an evening session commences an event, expenses will be reimbursed for travel that day.

Dates, Destination and Purposes

Please submit documentation of dates, arrival and departure times, final destination, and the purpose of each trip on the State of Vermont Reimbursement of Travel Expenses Form. All trips paid with VSIUGB funds must be SIU related. The State's Travel Reimbursement Form is available through any state employee assigned to your SIU.

Since no policy can cover every conceivable circumstance, it is anticipated that on occasion, unique situations will occur. These situations should be directed to the attention of the Grants Program Manager for resolution.

Transportation

1. Air Travel will be reimbursed at the most economical fare (coach fare).
2. Airfare will only be reimbursed for business-related travel. Individuals combining personal and business travel are responsible for the difference in ticket price.
3. Expenses for mileage by auto will be reimbursed at the current state (federal) per-diem rate. This rate is determined by the IRS and is available at www.gsa.gov .
4. When traveling by auto (by choice rather than necessity), no reimbursement will be made for lodging or meals expenses beyond those that would have occurred using air travel.
5. Ground transportation to and from social activities, including meals, will not be reimbursed.
6. **Auto Rentals require approval from the Grants Program Manager prior to travel.**

Meals and Incidentals

Please refer to the current state of Vermont collective bargaining agreement for guidance regarding reimbursement for meals and incidental expenses.

Lodging

1. VSIUGB grant funds may be used for lodging expenditures when needed for legitimate SIU related activities.
2. Individuals are responsible for incidental expenses charged to their hotel room (i.e. movies, telephone, laundry, valet, bar etc.)

Section IV: Mandatory Grant Forms (All grant reports must be received prior to the issuance of award payments).

All SIU Grants Program Forms and Grant Guidance can be viewed and downloaded for use at: <http://prosecutors.vermont.gov/special-investigation-units>

Narrative Report

A narrative report will be included as part of the quarterly reporting requirements due on or before October 15th, January 15th, April 15th, and July 15th.

Statistical Data

A statistical report will be included as part of the quarterly reporting requirements due on or before October 15th, January 15th, April 15th, and July 15th.

NCATrak is the standard system used to record statistical information for all SIU grant funded projects. To qualify for SIU Grant Awards, the applicant must validate the ability to report unit activity using NCATrak. This may be accomplished through a partnership agreement with another SIU.

Fiscal Documentation Reports

A fiscal report will be included as part of the quarterly reporting requirements due on or before October 15th, January 15th, April 15th, and July 15th.

Certificates of Insurance

Certificates of Insurance for all policies providing SIU coverage must be included each year with the Program Support Grant Application.

Budget Modification

The Vermont Special Investigative Unit Grants Board recognizes that in the development of SIU budgets and grant requests, it is nearly impossible to anticipate exact amounts for all line item expenses. It is the desire of the VSIUGB to give some fiscal latitude to grantees by allowing SIUs to move up to 5% of their total grant award between authorized line items, during a given grant period, without pre-authorization from the Grants Program Manager.

Example: *A SIU receives a \$50,000.00 award for FY14. During the grant period, the SIU may move up to a total of \$2,500.00 between approved funded line items.*

If during a grant period an SIU is faced with an unexpected expense and wishes to utilize current grant funds, a written request must be submitted to, and approval received from, the Grants Program Manager. This request must include a detailed explanation of the expense, the total amount of funds to be utilized, and how the SIU will cover expenses the grant was originally provided for.

Section V: Important Dates for Grantees

2013

- April 15th** By April 15th of the calendar year, each County Prosecutor and SIU Director will be notified of VT SIU grant opportunities and receive grant applications.
- May 15th** By May 15th of the calendar year, grant applications must be received by Grants Program Manager.
- June 1st** By June 1st of the calendar year, the Grants Program Manager will forward Completed Grant Applications to Members of the VSIUGB.
- June 27th** By June 27th of the calendar year, VSIUGB completes their review of grant applications and award funds.
- July 1st** By July 1st of the calendar year, grant applicants receive notification of awards.
- July 15th** By July 15th of the calendar year, current year grant recipients receive their first (50%) installment of their Program Support Grant award and 100% of their Law Enforcement Grant award.
- July 30th** By July 30th of the calendar year, close-out grant reports (if applicable) for previous year grants covering the period of (January 1st through June 30th) must be received by the Grants Program Manager.
- a.) If a previous year grant recipient ***does not*** receive a current year grant award, all unspent previous year grant funds must be returned with the close-out grant report. Checks shall be made payable to, and mailed to, the following address:
- VT Department of States Attorneys, SIU Fund
12 Baldwin Street, Drawer # 33
Montpelier, VT 05633-6401**
- b.) If a previous year grant recipient is the recipient of a current year grant, all unspent funds from the previous year grant will be kept by the recipient. The amount of unspent funds from the previous year grant will then be deducted from the second installment of the current year grant.
- October 15th** By October 15th, the 1st quarterly reports (**Fiscal, Narrative and Statistical**) covering the period of July 1st through September 30th must be received by the Grants Program Manager.

2014

January 15th By January 15th, the 2nd quarterly reports (**Fiscal, Narrative and Statistical**) covering the period of October 1st through December 31st must be received by the Grants Program Manager.

January 15th By January 15th of the calendar year, current year grant recipients receive their second (50%) installment minus all unspent previous year grant funds kept. (Refer to July 15th, section b).

April 15th By April 15th, the 3rd quarterly reports (**Fiscal, Narrative and Statistical**) covering the period of January 1st through March 31st must be received by the Grants Program Manager. **Deliverable Reports** are also due on this date.

July 15th By July 15th, the 4th quarterly reports (Fiscal, Narrative and Statistical) covering the period of April 1st through June 30th must be received by the Grants Program Manager.

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